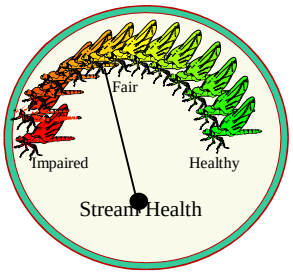


EcoSummary

Silver River Springs

6/7/2006



Background

Florida DEP's Division of Water Resource Management selected Silver River Spring for biological and water quality monitoring. Data from these efforts will be used for documenting conditions within the spring run and for making resource protection decisions. Silver River Springs is located northeast of Ocala in Marion County, Florida (Figure 1). The Silver River, which flows into the Ocklawaha River, is a Floridan Aquifer-dominated system known for its recreational and aesthetic qualities.

Samples were collected from Silver River Springs on June 7, 2006. Water chemistry samples were taken for ammonia, nitrate-nitrite, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, total phosphorus, color, turbidity, *Enterococci*, *Escherichia coli*, fecal coliform, and total coliform analysis (Figure 2). Habitat assessment and benthic invertebrate stream condition index (SCI) sampling were conducted.

Results

The nitrate-nitrite concentration (1.3 mg/L) at the sampling site was much higher than the values found in 95% of Florida streams; see Figure 2. Elevated nitrate-nitrite levels in Silver River Springs are related to nitrogen loading in the recharge basin. Ammonia was below minimum detection limits. TKN and total phosphorus was below the practical quantitation limit.

Enterococci and *Eschericia coli* densities complied with the EPA single-sample guideline value of 61 CFU/100 mL and 235 CFU/100 mL, respectively, for "designated beach areas." The total and fecal coliform concentrations complied with Class III water quality standards. Bacteria data were tested outside of holding time.

The overall habitat assessment score (129) was in the "optimal" range. Substrate Diversity and Habitat smothering were parameters of concern.

The SCI was recently recalibrated in order to make it a more effective tool for evaluating ecological health of streams. The sampling method remained the same; only the index calculation was changed. The recalibrated SCI tends to produce a more stringent evaluation, since two poorly performing metrics from the old SCI were discarded (% Diptera and number of Chironomid taxa). Five additional metrics correlated with human disturbance were added, for a new total of ten metrics. The ten metrics are: total taxa, Ephemeroptera taxa, Trichoptera taxa, percent filterers, long-lived taxa, clinger taxa, percent dominance, percent Tanytarsini, sensitive taxa, and percent very tolerant taxa. More details can be found in the FDEP Standard Operating Procedures, LT 7200. The recalibrated SCI went into effect June 8, 2004. SCI samples collected after that time may yield different results from prior evaluations.

The SCI score (46) moved into the "fair" range, potentially related to algal smothering. Lack of productive habitat was also a concern. Elevated nitrate-nitrite levels appeared to be the main stressor in Silver River Springs.

Figure 1: Overview Map of the Silver Springs Area

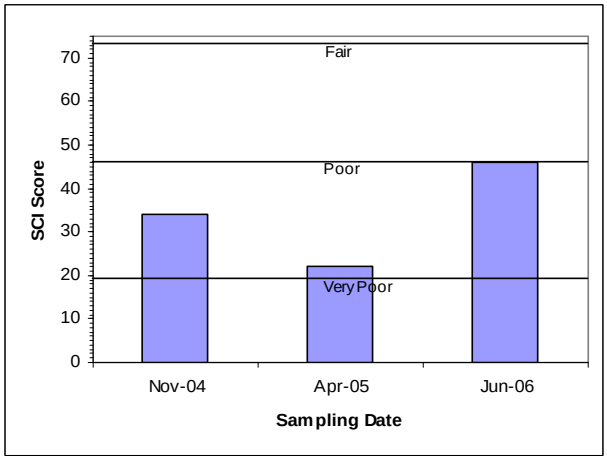


Figure 2: Data Table

SILVER SPRINGS			
Sampling Date	6/7/2006	**Physical-Chemical Data**	
Macroinvertebrate Data		Habitat Assessment Score	129
SCI Score	46	Temperature (deg. C)	23.9
SCI Evaluation	Fair	pH	7
Chemistry Data		Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)	6.3
Turbidity (NTU)	0.15	Specific Conductance (umhos/cm)	469
Color (PCU)	5	**Bacteria Data**	
Ammonia (mg/L)	0.01 U	*Escherichia coli* (col/100 mL)	4 B,Q
Nitrate-Nitrite (mg/L)	1.3	*Enterococci* (col/100 mL)	12 B,Q
TKN (mg/L)	0.095 I	Fecal Coliforms (col/100 mL)	8 B,Q
Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	0.037 I	Total Coliforms (col/100 mL)	50 Q

"I"=Below practical quantitation limit; "Q"=Outside of holding time; "U"=Below minimum detection limit; "B"=Based on colony counts outside acceptable range

Figure 3: SCI Scores for Silver River Springs Over Time



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Jessica Patronis, FDEP Environmental Assessment Section
2600 Blair Stone Road MS#6511 Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400
(850) 245-8070 Jessica.Patronis@dep.state.fl.us